

16 July 1945

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Memo No. 159

To: SCI Unit Z, Rome.
From: SCI Unit Z, Turin

1. Attached hereto is 515 FSS interrogation report
on Ottone VINATZER.

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Interrogation Report of VINATZER Ottone, if Italy, DOB 30 May 1896, POB Trento, Italy, collaborated closely with RSHA in Turin

PREAMBLE with Rds. Rome and Verona, suspected of being Amt. VI representative

1. The a/n man was arrested at the German Consulate in TURIN on 28 April 45 by the Questura of TURIN, and subsequently placed at the disposal of this section. A preliminary interrogation of subject was dispatched to G2 IV Corps on 26 May 45.

2. On 16 June 45 this section arrested BRANK Josef, WO SD TURIN (see this section's report on BRANK ref S/2/B/72 dated 5 July 45). BRANK was interrogated regarding VINATZER's connection with SD TURIN and volunteered the following information:-

a) That although VINATZER held no official post with SD TURIN, he was considered by SD personnel in TURIN as a representative of Amt. VI of the RSHA.

b) When Partisan General TRABUCCHI was arrested by SD TURIN, Oberstufhr BRUNCK told BRANK that the whole case must be handed to VINATZER, as VINATZER was the Amt. VI representative competent to deal with the case.

c) Captain SCHMIDT and Oberstufhr, BRUNCK often asserted that VINATZER was an Amt. VI official.

d) As the Allied entry into TURIN drew near, it became more generally agreed amongst SD TURIN personnel that VINATZER was an Amt. VI official, because of his frequent conferences with SCHMIDT in the days preceding the insurrection on the 25 April 45.

e) BRANK stated also that VINATZER controlled a number of agents about whom he, BRANK, is unable to supply useful information. BRANK did, however, overhear a conversation (which took place c. 5 April 45 in BRANK's office) between two of these agents, one named GIANNI, not better identified, and another not identified, and gathered the following from the conversation.-

i. VINATZER had been given the task of building up an espionage network in TURIN after the withdrawal of the German troops, and would send news direct to Amt. VI by wireless transmitter.

ii. VINATZER and his agents were under the direct control of Dr. Kappler, BDS, VERONA.

iii. VINATZER had instructed "Gianni" to buy a house, in which the wireless transmit would be installed. VINATZER had received 200,000 lire from VERONA for the purchase of the house, and "Gianni" complained that the sum was insufficient.

N.B.

BRANK has recently been reinterrogated by this section on the

above information supplied by him. He confirms points a,b,c and d, but has reduced the value of the information contained in point e by saying that as the conversation took place in Italian, he can not vouch for the accuracy of his deductions, and therefore point e simply represents his impressions following the conversation which he overheard.

Identity Particulars

Born - 30 May 1896 at TRENTO.

Parents - Father JOHANN, Italian of Austrian origin.
Mother Anna KALINKA, Austrian.

Nationality - Italian.

Occupation - Lawyer.

Home Address - S. Constantino di FIE (BOLZANO prov.)

Languages - Italian and German.

Documents - See this section's preliminary interrogation report on subject, ref. S/2/B/60 dated 26 May 45.

Summary of History up to June 44.

1923. VINATZER went to ROME, where he began to operate as legal representative of the German and Yugoslav populations of Alto Adige and Venezia Giulia. In addition he worked as the ROME correspondent of the BOLZANO German newspaper 'Dolomiten'. He continued this work until 1937.

1937. VINATZER became legal adviser to the German Embassy in ROME.

1942. His work as legal adviser to the German Embassy brought him into contact with German Military offices, including the BDS office in ROME.

Sep. 43. After the Italian Armistice, VINATZER was requested by KAPPLER, BDS, ROME, to prepare reports under the following headings:-

1. Reasons for the fall of Fascism.
2. Italian Civil and Military law.
3. The legal position of the Vatican city.
4. Civilian Morale.
5. Relations between German troops and civilian.

VINATZER was also required by KAPPLER to translate confidential documents.

In addition to this close collaboration with BDS ROME, VINATZER continued his work as legal adviser to the German Embassy, and was also engaged in the defence of Italians arrested by German Military authorities.

Movements since June 44

June 44. VINATZER left ROME shortly before the arrival of the Allies, and returned to his home at S. Constantino di FIE. Before leaving, he was told by BDS ROME that BDS VERONA would find his services useful.

Mid-June

44. Franz HOFER, Gauleiter of TYROL, BOLZANO, TRENTO and BELLUNO ordered total mobilisation of manpower in his area. VINATZER was instructed by BOLZANO police authorities to report to BDS VERONA. At BDS VERONA, VINATZER was employed by Sturmbannfuehrer TUROVSKI, director of Amt. III, BDS, and became the assistant of Hauptsturmfuehrer GEDIENER, who worked under TUROVSKI's direction. GEDIENER's office was engaged in the collection of information on political matters, subservive organisations, Partisan activity, Civilian Morale.

TUROVSKI's intention was that VINATZER should take over from GEDIENER the work of liaison with Benito MUSSOLINI, the Italian chiefs of State, and all highly placed Italian officials. GEDIENER, however, resented such a serious encroachment of his powers, and TUROVSKI reluctantly withdrew his proposal.

VINATZER remained in GEDIENER's office until mid-Aug. 44, and during this time his work consisted of reading the incoming mail, office routine, reports on civilian morale.

VINATZER's connections with other BDS departments at VERONA

VINATZER claims that he had no traffic with the other five departments of BDS office at VERONA. All he claims to know about them is that: -
Amt I and Amt. II were administrative offices.

Amt III, directed by TUROVSKI, employed VINATZER. Amt IV and Amt V were Police offices. Amt VI collected information from AOT and dispatched agents to AOT. (VINATZER says he remembers overhearing a conversation between Sturmbannfuehrer HUEGEL (Amt VI) and an Italian woman, in the ante-room to HUEGEL's office at BDS VERONA. HUEGEL told the woman to await the arrival of the Allies in ROMAGNA and instructed her to leave military matters severely alone.

VINATZER becomes legal Adviser to the German Consulate in TURIN

Mid-Aug. 44 - VINATZER tired of the work at the BDS office VERONA. Through the good offices of Doktor ALWENS, Vice-Consul at the TURIN Consulate, VINATZER was instructed by the German Embassy at FASANO to report to the German Consulate in TURIN in the capacity of Legal Adviser

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